

Mrs Geo. R. Gliddon,
New York.

See 4th sheet
for express instructions
HONDURAS INTEROCEANIC
RAILWAY CO. LIMITED.
Central Bureau - Honduras

Onoa, Honduras !!!
Sunday night - 11 P.M.
31st May 1857

My own dearest Nannie,

Dr. Holland is here, since I began, giving
physic to Hawkins, Burke, & Beech; so I can say
only "good night, my dearest!"

Resumed Tuesday night, 2nd June.

I hoped, and intended, when I got my "Deputy
Agency" in Honduras, not to lead by any means an
idle life, but at least one of pleasurable excite-
ment! We have been ashore here 25 days, and there
has ^{not} been one during which I have not "wished
myself in h - l, - G - d - me!" If Squier lets
you read, my own sweet wife, my "private and
personal" letter to him (as I suggest in it), or if
he will only give you the heads of the multifarious
annoyances endured since George & Anne "parted
in silence & tears, you will not wonder that I
have been unable yet to get a quiet two hours to
write to you & Charlie! But the cares of business
to an "old stager" like myself are only flea-bites
compared to the disgust I feel in being crowded into
one (very large, 'tis true) room with 6 persons - myself
inclusive! You know, dearest, "what indecency is";
but, when a beast; obstinate & stupid like Beech,
a lack-advised piece of helplessness like Burke,

& "a chronic invalid" like Hawkins, are all down on their backs with fever for the last five days; while a fidget like Henry is my best aid, and a pious squirt like Badarague his helpmate; with two servants who have to "get along" without sufficiency of any household necessities (1 chamber pot for 3 — turn about!), and a kitchen (such as it is!) 150 yards off; joined to mosquitos infinite, & temperature from 80 to 95 — you, my darling, will pardon my involuntary brevity in epistles to your dear self hitherto. You know that I like writing to you above all things, next to our loving embraces, — so you can imagine the double privation to me. But, I've sworn to get rid of these encumbrances in a few days; so soon as I can get the poor devils up, & ship them off to the interior! This puts me tonight in a better humor, so I close — as some of the "cups" want nursing — till tomorrow, blowing kisses to Charlie & yourself!

3rd June, Wednesday, 9 A.M.

I have determined, my love, to write to you and our dear boy today, "even if the skies should fall." As yet the morning has begun severely; but I devote Henry and Badarague to nursing & physicking the sick, with the aid of 2 servants; and I will not vex myself any more with their whimsicalities. Burke is decidedly "out of the wood," but peevish & "exigent" like a spoiled baby. Hawkins is also convalescent, and also the best patient. These two are lying on the floor, upon 2 mattresses a piece, clean &

and comfortable. I think they may be up in three or four days. The 3rd, Beech, was quite over it last Sunday, when in spite of the Doctor's orders & my earnest entreaties, he would get up, would eat, would do 50 senseless things, and the consequence was a severe relapse, that has brought him into a critical state. It is purely his own fault; & I have no compassion for his individuality, except for the sake of his family. He is over the way in a room by himself — thank heaven! — with a careful Jamaica nigger to nurse him, & visits from us every hour or so.

Now, what irritates me is, that their several complaints — bilious fever of the country, only a shade off from "yaller jack" — should have been caused by their each doing, contrary to my precepts & example. It is quite absurd for strangers in a new climate to begin and do that which, were they in London, would be the death of such spoonneys and sholl-coddles as Burke & Hawkins are. They would go bathing in the river, with a malarial mist over it, at sunrise; and walk out on empty stomachs. They would eat Bananas & Pine Apples at wrong hours; nor would they take stimulants as preventives. So, they were felled last week with the fever, have had a hard time of it since Saturday last, and are only out of danger since yesterday; i.e. the 2 gentlemen; for Beech is worse than ever today.

Old Badarague is always ailing, but is cautious and acclimated. Henry is very prudent, washes only 2 or 3 times a week at 5 P.M. in the river, and is semi-acclimated from residence & yellow fever at New Orleans. As for me, I am in perfect health & intend to remain so. Were I to feel the 1st symptoms of indisposition, you know, dearest, I should

should kill the "varmint" in 24 hours. Of course, I am very careful in hygiene personally; and could I only get rid of my three incumbrances, or live apart, all would be as agreeable as in any other d-d place like Orma.

I hope to get these fellows up, & send them off to the Uluu-river, as high up as Yojoa if I can, to recruit; & be out of my way! Then I shall follow, on mules, with Henry & B. Baraque, as we march towards Comayagua. But, my stay here depends upon reception of letters & money from Squire; from whom there is no news since we left New York.

According to Squire's promise, a vessel called the "Alden" was to leave Boston for Belize about the end of April, & he was to write by her: but she arrived at Belize last week & brought no letters to us.* Now, the next, and only certain, chance lies in the steamer which left New York on 5th May, by which D. Secoute and Weed's brother were to leave, via Panama, for La Union. They would be due at Comayagua about the 1st June; and a courier thence should reach me here by the 10th, with all the letters — Oh! how I long for yours! It is for this mail alone that I am waiting, in order to get out of this low country. Affairs here will be finished in about a week; and then I hope to be able to express a favorable opinion about Honduras, and to plan at Comayagua some proceeds for you & Charles joining us. At present, the future is a blank; so much depends on the success of the engineering surveys. I need not bore myself with a description of Orma, which is beautifully situated, because Squire, or Hitchcock, can explain its features viva-voce better than I can.

6th June. This is another of the false reports in which Orma abounds. The "Alden" brought out Secoute to Belize, who only staid there one day, and reached

*

* Besides, I wrote to Gibbes, inclosing a letter to Squire, by the best direct mail steamer which leaves Belize on the 18th of each month. I beg him to let John & Mrs Burke know of our safety here, and that letter must be nearly in London now.

3rd - 1 P.M.

I have just made a rice-pudding for the two, & sent some arrow-root over to Beech; who has an ugly symp-
tom, bleeding at the nose. Also, I have doctored my own feet,
and that, you know, my love, always improves my temper.

Let me see, now, what attempts I have made to
send tidings of our safe arrival on the 6th -
6th May - by schooner, via Belize, note to Squire -
" " " " - to New Orleans, - do. -
13th " " " " - via Belize - to you -
20th " " " " - do. - to Squire & you -
23rd " " " " - "Helen Jane", via Boston, - do. - do. - *

You see, my own dear Nan, that I have tried
hard to send intelligence of our well-being, whilst waiting
for the departure of the "Favaria" herself; which is to
take our heavy mail, & complete accounts to Squire up
to the day she goes. There have been all sorts of delays
& changes about this vessel - sometimes going, & oftener
not! At last, she is loading mahogany at Puerto Cabal,
ostensibly, to be off hence next Sunday; but the wise
say, not for some days later. Still, I am getting all
things ready for her; and after that you will not hear
from us probably for a month - except by chance -
until reaching Comayagua, & understanding how to
send round, by La Union & Panama, to New York. This
once set aight, you will hear regularly once a month.

I take for granted - considering my relations with
Squire, and the intimacy of your acquaintance now
with him - that he will give you every possible detail,

with narrative of my troubles since landing. They were very perplexing and vexatious; the more so because Causeys on my part, and unexpected to every body but the "conspirators" and the "deserters."

Happily, those evils soon ended. I got the mastery at last, by bringing things to a "dead lock" by "masterly inactivity." The Engineers took the field on the 14th; have finished Puerto Caballos; and are now up the Chamelico, in 3 parties, towards Rancho Grande; intending by and bye to cross to the River Uluca, whether I am to forward supplies to a point called Santiago. This shipment, to be made within a week, will relieve me of the necessity of continuing at Comoa, after money arrives. I shall then forward our heavy baggage direct to Comayagua; and mounting our mules with Henry, Badarague, Geo. Waters our steward, and Chico Ebe our head muletier [see his portrait & nation, in "Indig. Races," - Tableau, N^o. 27 - tell Charlie!], ride after the Engineers, take a look at their operations, and then push ahead to Comayagua - my grand panacea of a resting place - where I hope to get fixed decently. At present we are only encamped in a large room, eating off tin plates, and provided with a set out far homelier than you & I, my dear wife, possessed at Sharpsburg, or at Mobile Bay. (You have a map)

Our mule establishment is not handsome, but serviceable enough; as Charlie can gather from the following list of the studs now grazing out of town till we are ready to mount them: -

- 1st - Squire's white mule - said to be pretty wicked - for me.
2^d - Do's brown " - _____ for Henry -
3^d - Hitchcock's white " - _____ for Badarague -
I bid \$1000 for each.

To which add some 5 or 6 for baggage & servants, and you have an idea of our equipment. Jerry & I have tried our new saddles on them. With slight shortening of the straps they suit perfectly. But I have not yet seen a good mule or horse in Orinoco. When you two come out, I will have the best I can find in the upper country ready for you: but, as yet, I know not a bit more about Central America than I did in the Northern! I have not been out of the house often for days; and never yet $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile from it.

As for the people, there is not a white woman in the place! The two or three "ladies," so-called, appear to be Spanish Indian, & I - I poor ones at that. The population is chiefly nigger, with a great deal of mulatto. Not a really pretty girl of any kind have I yet set eyes on. You need not, therefore, be alarmed about my constancy! Had I lived united such in Egypt I should have been a "wargin"! There is no temptation to learn Spanish to talk with such as these. Indeed, whilst I understand almost all people say, I believe that I should pick up the "lings" faster if I did not speak Italian. It offends my ear to listen to Spanish, after our mellifluous "lingua Toscana in bocca Romana."

You perceive, my dearest Nannie, that I have really nothing interesting to write about — Oppressive heat, and plenty of mosquitos, tolerably poor fare, are not enlivening!

Let me derive some pleasurable emotions by wondering how you & dear Charlie are — what you are doing — whether you are both well & happy?

Very dismal, more so than at any of my departures, were my feelings on leaving you & Charlie, my dear ones, this time. I knew, however, that, unlike many former times, means were ample, & that you were left safely amongst "ours"; but, — — — — — I could not conquer my sadness: it had to wear itself out by degrees on the voyage. Now, of course, I am only anxious for letters, in view of our little darling's health. I am not of a hypochondriacal turn, so I wait patiently & hopefully. By G —! I can truly feel that I earn my enlarged income, not only in work here, but in heart-aches besides! However, 'tis no use fretting the paper with alarms, probably groundless.

Holland has interrupted this paragraph with his 2nd visit to our invalids, who are now in the low stage but doing very well, — except Beech, whose obstinacy & phiggishness have brought ^{him} to the crisis. If he lives 24 hours, he'll recover. The Doctor is a first-rate practitioner, and good-natured to a fault. He has his eccentricities, notwithstanding. We 6, and the Doctor, constitute all that remains in Orma of our party of 44. The rest are some 30 miles off, and we have no news from them since four days. A few were unwell from their fatigues at Puerto Caballas, but only one at all seriously. I fear that, owing to delays in the advent of 36 boats from Standing Creek, due since Monday, the corps will be much longer on the Atlantic side than desirable.

We have rumors from New York to the 28th, stating that "Honduras" is the talk of the papers. I am curious to learn how our book gets received; although I often forget that I was ever an "author," far less a "man of science" - surrounded by the sort of persons so far removed from those ideas! Except always Burke, whose brains, you know of old, I regard as "squeezed lemons"! Henry is my most natural, & by far most efficient man. He never flinches from work at any time; and is in most excellent health & vigor: but we have no place to converse in yet by ourselves. He got through a sort of letter to dear Charlie, whom he most talks of, & sent it; but, besides his ordinary repugnance to writing, there is really nothing worth telling yet from "Honduras".

Ormoa, 12th June 1857 - 10 A.M.
At last, my own dearest Nannie, I begin to breathe freely!
I knew, on the 5th at 11 P.M., by the sudden (and unexpected) arrival of Dr. Leconte from Belize, & thence from New York of "Alden", that my loved ones were quite well on the 12th May! What a relief that was to my mind! From that moment I have been sprightly as lark, strong as a bull, and often "savage as a meat-axe", - but always myself in the midst of death, sickness, worry, and anxieties of every kind. But, the dead are buried, the sick (except Old Bada-gue, & he is convalescent) sent off yesterday to the hills, and Henry & I are alone, & comfortable.

Yet, all these cares were nothing compared to constant whisperings of "the still, small voice" - I wonder how Charlie is? I felt, if he were safe & well, that his dear Mama must be "all right". Well, Dr. Leconte's arrival, with your affectionate packet of 10th ~~letter~~, dispelled the demon-thought about you & two selves; and now, as I hear again that the "Favorita" is to sail in five days, I seize my first leisure to "post up my books" with you, my own sweet, and you, my "deco duck" - begging you to kiss each other for Papa in the meantime, till I shall be read over again your precious scribbles.

Let us go to my diary, on the 3rd June.

As I expected, poor Beech's relapse killed him early in the morning of the 4th - his gluttony, drinking gin on the sly too while under fever (!), and his pig-headedness, were tantamount to suicide. Feeling great pity for his poor wife & daughters, I have written a long letter to Mr. Beech, which goes open to Squire, with this, and from him you ^{can} glean all particulars. I send back by "Favorita" his trunk & hatbox, contg. clothes &c., his watch, & about \$36 proceeds of sale of his outfit, that otherwise would be dead loss to her. After you have seen Squire, pray write a consoling note to Mr. Beech, with my assurances that I did all I could for him, & take great interest in himself & family. So ended the 4th.

Hardly through this job, aside from endless bother at home with Bunker & Hawkins, & outside about supplying

the engineers' camp, when Dr. Holland was knocked down by fever too in his own pharmacy. He was the worst patient of the lot! And he fell ill when most wanted, because Burke & Hawkins were still shaky, & peevish - Jesus! Late on the evening, just I was taking the first guest in - travel to begin a new my letter to you, in came Lecoute & Don Alvarado from Belize; & the former shook himself down with us on the floor, for night of 5th June.

Early on the 6th Baraque broke down, & I had him carried behind the partition of our room, with a nurse, to work out his own salvation. Damned if I would be "servant of all work" any longer! Our head man, mates the steward, also fell ill with choli, - Holland had a furious raving spell; and Lecoute, who came here as "geologist" soon was compelled to be Doctor! He was not a little nervous about his own health besides, but his presence, I believe, saved Holland's life. So passed the 7th & 8th - pleasantly! All this in the midst of a great ^{deal} of commissariat work; and, to crown all, a sudden lack of money to carry on the Company's business, which was not overcome until the 9th! Now, we are all safe again in that respect.

On this day, another patient stretched out on our floor - already lumbered enough - in the person of Mr. Cornille, who had ridden in from camp, after a very severe illness, & consequently relapsed. The only man who was beginning to move about was Hawkins! as for poor Burke, he is only an "old woman" - fit for no earthly purpose, & I had to tell him so. Lecoute & I

then decided to cut matters short at once. I sent Chico to bring in our 14 mules, packed up ~~the~~ traps, got provisions, &c., on the 10th; and, to my unspeakable relief, got off Holl and with his medicine-chests, Luke Burke (first time on a mule in his life, & scared at his shadow), Hawkins, M^c. Connick, and their servants with baggage, — all under charge of Leconte, who is under charge of old Chico — to San Pedro, where they arrive today, and stay till they will. Thither Grantwin's lines will converge next week from the swamps of the Chamelco; so they will be all together for a time. We were up at 3¹/₄ yesterday morning (I had laid down only at half past two!) and they were away by 5¹/₂. Harry & I instantly had the room cleared up, made a new storeroom, took a nap, and went to a ball in the evening! Today we are placed as lambs, it being the 1st day's quilt I have had since I left Philadelphia — and the 1st without annoyances since I got on board the "Favosita", on 16th April!

You can judge how little recreation I have had, when I mention that, of the pile of newspapers sent out by Squire for Leconte, I have not looked at one till this minute, when Harry brought me the "Herald" of 22nd April with the notice of "Indig. Races." I had forgotten that I was even an author! It is shorter than I expected, but does very well for the purpose of announcing the book. I observe, and thank you for, the sending of copies of it to our friends.

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About the ball. It was given by Amos in honor of the fall of Walker, and, invited officially, the Deputy Agent & Secretary had to attend. For two nights previously we had joined in an Illumination (such a farce!) by hanging out 3 dim lanterns over our balcony. It was an assemblage of "colored persons", not a white woman out of 25, with a sprinkling of white men - skippers of Yankee schooners, and a few snobs, being the most prominent. I stand an hour for decency-sake; but I felt like a visitor to a ball given by mulatto-barbers & stewards to ladies of color, without the brilliance with which they "do it up" in a city of the North! I wonder what a white-girl looks like! When you & Charlie come, you must ^{bring} lots of them - Kate, & the rest. I can find the right ^{set} of husbands "independently of age, color, or creed" for them; but poor as church mice!

Old B. Tarapur, whom I thought at his last gasp yesterday morning, is better today. He will recover now, to be my "incubus" again, I fear. But, only let me get him on a mule, & if he can't ride I'll soon be rid of him. I've borne with weakly & useless folks long enough, & now I'll get quit of every one!

Well, dearest - after 36 days of miserable life, I begin to see daylight about getting away from this pestiferous town; where, however, Henry & I have ^{nothing} to complain as to health, only of heat & mosquitoes.

Our arrangements seem now (1st, 2nd, 3rd, &c...!!) -
1st - to get ready for the "Favorita". She will go, 'tis said, on Wednesday next. Then, no more letters to write

write for me till I get to Comayagua - a journey
of 20 days the way I am going. Thence I shall write
by Panama, once a month.

2nd - I have one, the final, shipment of stores to make
next week to the mouth of the river Ulua, whence
they will go to Yojoa.

Then, this Deputy Agency may "clear out."

3rd - I shall prepare, next week, for our caravan, and
get back the mules lent to the invalids. I shall
take old Chico, and one servant, besides 2 muleteers;
and hope to mount about Sunday the 21st, with
Henry, & perhaps old Badaryes, for the interior.

4th - I propose to spend a day in looking over Puerto
Caballeros & the lagoon; and thence ride directly to
Rancho Grande, calling at the Engineer's Camps
on my way. At San Pedro I may have to pick
up Burke & Hawkins, and carry them along -
what to do, it would "be at Bannacher" to
tell! I expect to halt a day or two, with
Alvarado & Trantwine, about Yojoa, and thence
ride on to Comayagua; where I hear a good
house is prepared for me, - and another, you
may be sure of that, for engineers &c. &c. If
my house has rooms - after separating my private
bedroom & Henry's, my office, & all I want to
be completely "maître chez moi" - I will let those
who like fig in them, & meep at a public table
twice a day; but no more hey-fellow-well-met
with anybody for me. I'm cured of sociability!

5th - I have sacrificed all my personal comforts & habits to please everybody, and without much avail. So I now intend to let each man "skin his own shunks"; whilst I take a little country-life, shooting, &c. - to see if Honduras is like Omoa throughout.

At Comayagua I shall have Squire's new instructions by Weed, and then can enjoy some minutes out of the 24 to myself. Whilst I get there, I can form no idea of the future, wherefore, my dearest, I won't say more than that you & Charlie shall come out as early as it can be achieved.

I wish you, as opportunity occurs, ^{would} read to Squire some of these items, in order that he may understand that I flinch from no kind of work (I've plenty of that, and to spare, as he will judge by my official letters, &c.); but that, in order to be able to do it as he wishes I must be left free from incumbrances. I came to work for him & the Company; and not to waste time in waiting over helpless poor devils, sick or infirmities, - who are too old to learn, & too self-obsessed to follow counsels. He would not have endured for a day what I have had to suffer more than a month; nor does he intend that I should. Of course I do not in the least refer to the tail of business. I shall never grumble so long as I am not worked more than 16 hours out of the 24.

On the other hand, my dearest absentee, the main objects for which I came are going on steadily; Squire will explain how well the political matters are arranged, and

and the Company's relations with the Honduras Government secured, — better than Squier even expects! Transwaine has got nearly through the worst of the road, and speaks with great confidence of eventual success. I shall be able to tell decisively about all this from Comayagua. Nothing essential has gone wrong, and I believe our expectations will be fulfilled. On these points, my love, give yourself no concern; but draw your allowance, and every thing else you require for comfort & enjoyment. I have not spent \$3 of my income since leaving New York! Being found like the rest, there is nothing to waste money on in this three-to-hole.

But, enough of egotism! I will now come over your dear letters; and the Journal which gives me such an excellent insight into your daily routine.

16th June, Tuesday — after another hiatus of 3 Days.

My own beloved Wife & dear boy,

Two months today since we parted. Yesterday, 2 years ago, we left Paris for Boulogne; and yesterday last year, at Philadelphia, ~~arrived~~ from I settled about "Indignant Kees" with Lippincott, & we prepared for getting out of Miss Adams, which led to our going to the Beeches! trifling changes in 2 years for us three!!

Henry & I are both "fast-rate", and have been busily drawing up my III. Report to Squier in this interim since I intended to re-read your letters. Old Bad as you is picking up, & may be able to accompany us next week. If he is not, I'll drop him for good, and "no mistake". Meanwhile, we are preparing our Kits.

We have heard from the invalids at 5
San Pedro. They are doing well. I send their "original" notes
of the 13th to Squire, just to show him what a helpless
set they are - forgetting their heads, and bothering me to send
them (without notes!) the very things (wine, &c.) I urged them
to take along - & they wouldn't! A letter from Mrs. Burke
arrived yesterday, from Belize, which I sent on to her "milk sop".
As it came by the West India Steamer which brought here
London papers to 17th May, I have gained an idea, which
I trust to you, my love, to execute for me, as it will
enable me sometimes to hear even from you, by way of
England. Write, as soon as you can, in short notes, with
my best regards & urgent recommendations, to
our brother Jack } telling them to address, about
our sister Emma } the 16th of every month, by the
& to N. Trübner - } "West India Mail", via Belize,
and directed as follows, any letters & papers they may
be so kind as to send a "puff filler" so remote
from the world as I shall be for some months: -
Yours
G.

GEO. R. SHEDDEN Esq.,

Deputy Agent Honduras Inter-oceanic
Railway Company Limited,
Comayagua.

Care of

Messrs. J. F. Debrot & Brother,
Orma,
Honduras.

for British West India Royal-mail Steamer,
via Belize.

Tell them, they can send this way whatever
they like, and it will reach me safely; because
the Debrots here are my friends & agents, who keep
one of their own schooners running weekly between
Ormosa & Belize. Parcels, or anything else, can be
thus addressed from England; and will reach me in
less than 40 days at Comayagua, if a letter of
advice to written by anybody to Debot & Brother
that the things are for me. It is all arranged here
with them — "nuff sed". I can answer by the post
for Belize that leaves Ormosa on the 12th of every
month to overtake the return West India Steamer,
thence on the 18th.

~~~~~  
Now I'll try & get at your letters!  
I take them paragraph by paragraph; & feel disposed  
to cover them with kisses, only Henry is writing at the  
same table, & it won't do for the Agent to show  
"pheelix" even to his "Private Secretary" during business  
hours!

Your first date is the 20<sup>th</sup> April — Annie — vers.  
— a day of our wedding-day at Richmond, 11 years ago.  
Yes, dearest, dearly do I remember that 24 hours of  
our first emancipation from "platonic" (?) love!  
Nor, whilst lying sick in the "Favorita", did my thoughts  
not run back to the "Amazon" last year. Ah! me!  
Heigho!!! I think, too, of our last embraces, Tuesday  
night, 14<sup>th</sup> April; when we did not expect to part  
so suddenly. Yet, as fond memory dwells on other times as well

I propose reminding you, my dearest, in one of our private notes, in one of our private notes, in one of our private notes.



6  
Whilst I write, we are having one of our  
tropical showers of rain — such a comfort! — the drops  
spatter sometimes through the chinks of our upper window in  
this rough wooden house, on my paper. Don't take them for  
tears! Other such stains on the paper are perspiration!  
[There is the Parrot "in fits" again!]

And now, let me refer to your dear Adult  
companions, Lawrence, Stasia, & Anne Phillips, — and to  
Charlie's beloved playmates & kindest of cousins, Katie,  
Daisie, Gertrude, Jessy, and Rose — and to my pet sailor-  
boy Teddy, upon whose happy return all of you will accept,  
as well as himself, my sincere congratulations. I don't really  
know what extravaganzas in the way of kissing & tickling  
I should commit, had I a chance to get at any one of  
the 7 "females" enumerated — Anne Phillips not omitted!  
A white-man who hasn't seen a white woman for two  
months may be allowed to wonder what one is like! In  
the meanwhile, pray assure Lawrence how sensible I am of  
his fraternal kindnesses — Stasia, how I congratulate you, &  
Charlie (& my heart) that she is ever with you —  
Anne Phillips (who, were it not treachery to dear Stasia,  
I'd run off <sup>with</sup> to Honduras!) how kind I take it of her  
to include Charlie & you in her cares — Katie, now a  
real adult, when is she coming? — Daisie, how I'd  
"nuzzle" her on my knee — Gertrude, what a "kissing" she  
would get! And Rosie, and Jessy — I would jump them  
sky-high. I depute you, dearest, to kiss Lawrence, &  
Charlie to do Papa's honors to the fair-sex — keep 'em  
tickle 'em, smack 'em all well! I observe Mrs. Lawrence's  
splendid presents on her 42<sup>nd</sup> birthday. Altogether, you all



as comfortable & happy as I hoped. By this time, I suppose, you are discharging your joint duties to the country; and this letter will probably find you & Charlie enjoying rural felicity. Margaret appears to be a nice girl; and I renew to her my offer whenever you & she agree that she is to come out here — when, I guess alone can judge.

Thus, my dearest Nannie, I have re-viewed over every letter of your Journal, 17<sup>th</sup> April (day I left Cairo, 1841; left London, 1856; left New York, 1857) to May 10; and with renewed satisfaction at all the contents. Charlie, dear fellow, is out of all danger, and time will put him right. I ain't fearful for his Ma (!) so long as she has \$100 a month, "ale, & wine"; and can be near Stasia while I'm absent. I return to your letter 4<sup>th</sup> May. Resumed at 10 P.M. - 16<sup>th</sup>.

I took a longer siesta than usual — from 7 to 9 — & having cooled off with tea, and waited until all are asleep (except the frogs, which the rains have brought all round the house, making such a din), I am calm as a cucumber; and amusing myself by putting my tongue into the vacuum where my tooth was! Owing to long mustache it is hardly perceptible, and if it were it would matter in London!

Squire's "Jemima" is a myth to me, but I shouldn't think him a marrying man — not so green! I observe the change of office & lodgings. The latter are not far from you. I lived in St. Charles' Place with Roberts in Jan'y. 1847; and it was there I visited the Kellys. All your room arrangements &c. are very



intelligible & felicitous.

Pray write to dear William my best love, and sympathies for his indisposition. Henry, I believe, has a letter on the anvil for him, and I would write if I had any thing to say more than you have herein. I am keeping an eye to windward for him, but until I have been at Coma-gagua & Fonseca can form no opinion on this country. Henry & I understand the "naturels du pays" in Spanish easily enough, but it is the devil to speak it for an Italian! I feel ashamed of uttering such miserable corruptions — besides, I have <sup>never</sup> felt much leaning towards Spaniards, let alone their bastard Central American descendants. We shall "get along" with them, but that's all!

Thanks for the forgotten toothbrush &c. for me, & Henry night shirt.

About your funds. They seem satisfactory — only, don't let Mrs. Tilston ever get more from you than one week ahead! It is a custom in Boarding houses to barrow, and might lead to a great deal of trouble if you are too generous.

Odd that Dada should have measles a 2<sup>nd</sup> time; but with the Doctor's care & gums, my own Nan, there is nothing serious in a few days' rash. — and then Eugene was coming to "play soldiers"!

The news from dear Rose, & letters from John, Henry "the Honduras", and Mamie are very pleasing. All such family reports are very welcome. I do not now reply for the reasons given above — nothing yet to say; but I forget nothing & nobody of "ours". A few weeks more will enable me to speak decidedly, and in the interim always send back my best love.



Lastly, - your queries about our "traps" may be answered by saying that, although neither saddles, nor arms, have yet been tried, I congratulate myself heavily on the completely-furnished outfit we possess - spite of Squier's sneers at my "conveniences"! My stock has been the main-stay of the party, from a hammer to a paragon - an envelope to blacking brushes! Such a miserable want of provision in others in these matters you never saw. The consequence is, my comrades have come upon me till I'm tired of lending; & now have become more selfish, seeing that such is the order of the day on their parts. I am now fitting up my mule-gear in Arab fashion; & when I can afford it, shall send out to Egypt for saddles &c. &c. The poor beasts of Honduras, biped & quadruped, are no more to be compared in skilful to Egyptians than a costermonger's donkey to a racer! What they want most here is Turkish government for a few years, and the stick

"that came down from heaven, a blessing from God. However, the Railroad will answer as well - they little know its consequences. All my anxiety about white-folks here is the climate. We shall see; and of course, the interior must be judged of by Comaa.

When you & Charlie (and the g'hals) come out, it must be so arranged before-hand, that you do not stay 3 days even in Comaa. I must be here with a whole caravan of mules, and you, & carry you off 50 miles into the country, without stopping even for kipes. Out of some 25 Americans & English new-comers here, only Henry & I are free from fever!

The musquito-net in shape are perfect, but the material should be much closer & heavier on around top, the "sand flies" - remember, breast.



By your journal I see that Charlie had  
"a night free from pain" the day after I left, and even had his  
towns on one day later. This is far more progress than I expected,  
and within a few days I perceive he trotted about merrily.  
I am rejoiced that "Margaret" suits you both, & can well  
imagine the relief it is to his Ma to have a "neph",  
to put on David's "corduroys & grey jacket" - ahem! The  
cooking apparatus must also be a great comfort: in fact I  
see nothing unpleasant in your joint situation since I  
left. Dr. Elliott appears very attentive. Pray give my warm  
and most grateful regards. His skill & kindness are my  
"sheet anchors", tell him.

Not less do I admire your shopping excursions,  
"Mrs. Shaddon, Maam!" You appear to be "dressed up brown",  
this time. I do not omit Mrs. Knight's kind call, & the  
constant attentions of dear Mrs. Weyman. Of course, to both  
ladies my gratefullest thanks, but with the addition of  
love to Mrs. W. & Martha. Truly, her care of you two  
touches my feelings deeply. Her kind presents to Charlie only  
are too magnificent.

Mrs. Weed's kind attentions (money, ale, wine,  
&c.) are very gratifying; and tell him I'll make it less  
in cordiality to his brother when he joins me.

I observe the remittance of £25 to dear Emma,  
which settles up her way in £75 to God. My love when  
you write to her & every one; but say, that, until I get  
out of this d-d place, & reach Comayagua, I rather shrink  
from letter-writing to anybody! I've nothing to write about,  
but disagreeables so far; wherefore, hoping for a change, I  
reserve epistles till I know really something of Honduras.

I shall get up a few lines, however, to Lippincott, Knight,  
& Nett, for "Favonita" - now postponed till Saturday!!!

All Charlie's love - I am that he is becoming  
a brave boy!



6

I felt dispirited enough when I scratched your & Charlie's names in the 2 books; but the good news of his melioration since (almost immediately after I left, too) has so relieved my heart, that I think lightly now over my sorrows then. They were deeper than I dared to show. On the 7<sup>th</sup>, you write "Charlie is in the Square"! & your journal so well explains each step of his convalescence that I have no longer uneasiness about his ultimate recovery. Kiss him most tenderly from his "Papa"; who thinks of him night & day, and finds himself often speculating about how Charlie would like Honduras. Not much, tell Ducky, had he been with me now! He would have enjoyed yesterday a scene with a Parrot I saw opposite to our house, where a family of "cul & pups" resides. There is a black girl who sits talking at the door every evening, and who laughs immoderately, in peculiar nigger fashion, at each sentence. I had heard, just before dinner (at 6) the same sort of movement going on for some time, when, happening to go into the balcony, I looked across & saw nobody — door shut — when, on a pole outside the door, sat Poll — a fine green fellow, with red tips to his wings — laughing ready to kill himself, in exact imitation of the girl! Between whiles he muttered Spanish in a different voice as if another person had spoken; & then shaking his head & rocking to & fro, he'd go off in screams of laughter — cocking his eye at me to see if I noticed him!

